

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-15, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. §102, based upon the "IBM MQSeries Workflow Getting Started With Buildtime" Version 3.12 (referred to as IGM MQSeries Workflow). The Examiner also asked for information as follows: Is the instant invention related to the commercial for sale and for use product IBM Flow Mark or IBM MQSeries Workflow.

In response to this request for information, Applicants wish to advise the Examiner that this invention is not related to the IBM Flow Mark or MQSeries Workflow. This invention was conceived and developed independent of the IBM Flow Mark and MQSeries Workflow.

Applicants are amending independent Claims 1, 6 and 11 to better define the subject matters of these claims. In addition, new Claims 16-18, which are dependent from Claim 1, are being added to describe preferred features of the invention.

For the reasons discussed below, Claims 1-18, as presented herewith, patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is, thus, requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102, and to allow these claims and new Claims 16-18.

As explained in detail in the present application, this invention relates to a method and system of providing an infrastructure for managing a process. In this invention, a workflow type is defined, a workflow pointer is built that defines the location of a database within a network, and subforms are coded for the defined workflow type. Role documents are defined and customized, process flow documents are built for the defined workflow type, and action control documents are built for determining what happens to the defined workflow type.

There are a number of important differences between this invention and the prior art cited by the Examiner. One important difference is that this invention does not require any queuing concepts. In both FlowMark and MQ Series Workflow, the workflow is built to be pushed to defined data queues where it is later picked up, processed, and forwarded to the next queue until the defined application workflow is completed. It may also be the case that these workflow events are pushed onto queues by applications defined on these two products, and there may be a further background process that handles the queues and the data delivering it to predefined additional queues.

The present invention does not require queuing of any application defined workflow steps. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, users access the application centralized on some single server, where they perform various application defined tasks and then take some application defined workflow action that performs the workflow tasks realtime. These tasks may be performed against the application defined centralized data repository.

For example, one of the customizable application features is to send mail (using Javamail) to application defined roles with an application defined URL. The users receive mail and use the URL link in the mail to access the documents requiring their attention (application defined workflow).

Another important difference between the preferred embodiment of this invention and the prior art is that the preferred embodiment of the invention does not require background processing to monitor and/or manage application defined workflow. All the needed processing may be done at the time an application user accesses an application defined workflow page and/or takes an application defined workflow action.

Actions may be defined as links on the web pages. These actions may be application defined content and code that maps to the applications defined workflow definition. This defined workflow

definition may be stored as application workflow data and in part is used to generate the application's user interface, controlling what is displayed, what is editable, and what work can be performed based on who is accessing the user interface page, the page they are accessing, and the current workflow status of the page.

Independent Claims 1, 6 and 11 clearly describe differences between the claims and the prior art. Specifically, Claim 1, which is directed to a method of providing a flexible infrastructure for managing a process, includes the feature that this method is administratively maintained through a single point of control. Claim 6 is directed to a system for providing a flexible infrastructure for managing a process, and this claim includes the limitation that the system is administratively maintained through a single point of control. Similarly, Claim 11 sets forth method steps for providing a flexible infrastructure for managing a process, and this claim describes the feature that these steps are administratively maintained through a single point of control.

The use of this single point of control is advantageous for a number of reasons. As discussed above, with this feature, the application defined tasks can be performed on a single server, where they may perform various application defined tasks and then take some application defined workflow action that performs the workflow tasks realtime.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and these other references, whether considered individually or in combination, also do not disclose or suggest this single point of control feature of the present invention.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 6 and 11, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, these claims patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-5 and 16-18 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 1.

Likewise, Claims 7-10 are dependent from Claim 6 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 12-15 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 11. Consequently, the Examiner is asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102, and to allow these claims and new Claims 16-18.

Every effort has been made to place this application in condition for allowance, a notice of which is requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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